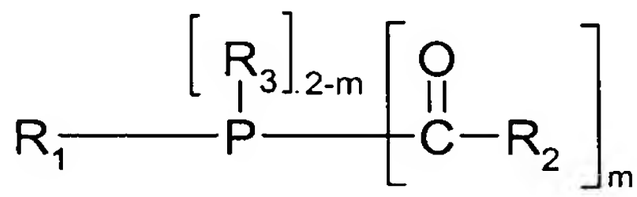
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for the preparation of acylphosphines of formula (I)



(I),

wherein

m is 1 or 2;

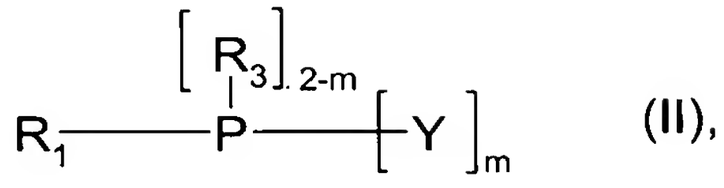
R_1 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, C_2-C_{18} alkyl which is interrupted by one or several non-successive O atoms, phenyl substituted C_1-C_4 alkyl, C_2-C_8 alkenyl, phenyl, naphthyl, biphenyl, or C_5-C_{12} cycloalkyl, the radicals phenyl, naphthyl, biphenyl, or C_5-C_{12} cycloalkyl being unsubstituted or substituted by one to five halogen, C_1-C_8 alkyl, C_1-C_8 alkylthio and/or C_1-C_8 alkoxy;

R_2 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, C_3-C_{12} cycloalkyl, C_2-C_{18} alkenyl, phenyl, naphthyl, or biphenyl, the radicals phenyl, naphthyl, or biphenyl being unsubstituted or substituted by one to four C_1-C_8 alkyl, C_1-C_8 alkoxy, C_1-C_8 alkylthio and/or halogen;

R_3 is C_1-C_{18} alkyl, C_2-C_{18} alkyl which is interrupted by one or several non-successive O atoms; phenyl substituted C_1-C_4 alkyl, C_2-C_8 alkenyl, phenyl, naphthyl, biphenyl, or C_5-C_{12}-cycloalkyl, the radicals phenyl, naphthyl, biphenyl, or C_5-C_{12} cycloalkyl being unsubstituted or substituted by one to five halogen, C_1-C_{18} alkyl, C_1-C_8 alkylthio and/or C_1-C_8 alkoxy;

comprising

(1) reacting organic phosphorus halides of formula (II)



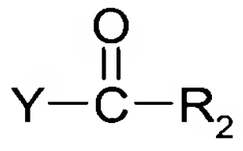
(II),

wherein R_1, R_3 and m have the meaning cited above;

and Y is Br or Cl,

with sodium in a solvent in the presence of an activator, wherein sodium is pre-sent in the form of a dispersion of sodium particles having a mean particle size of $\leq$500 μm in the solvent,

(2) subsequent reaction with acid halides of formula (III)



(III),

wherein R_2 and Y have the meaning cited above;

which process is carried out without isolation of the intermediates,

wherein the activator is selected from the group consisting of ~~aliphatic alcohols having 1 to 10 carbon atoms~~ n-butanol, aromatic chlorohydrocarbons, aliphatic chlorohydrocarbons, aromatic bromohydrocarbons, aliphatic bromohydrocarbons, and combinations thereof.

Claim 2 (Original): The process according to claim 1, wherein R_1, R_2 and R_3 are independently from each other phenyl, naphthyl and biphenyl, being unsubtituted or substituted by one to five halogen, C_1-C_8 alky and/or C_1-C_8 alkoxy.

Claim 3 (Original): The process according to claim 2, wherein R_1 and R_3 are phenyl and R_2 is 2,4,6-trimethylphenyl.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein the activator is chlorobenzene, n-butanol, or a combination thereof.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein the sodium is dispersed in the solvent by means of a high speed turbine stirrer.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein from 4 to 8 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 2; and 2 to 4 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 1.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein the reaction (1) of the organic phosphorus halides (II) with the sodium is carried out at a temperature of from -20° to +160°C.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein the reaction (2) is carried out at a temperature of from -20° to +120°C.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 1, wherein (1) and (2) are carried out in toluene, ethyl benzene, or a combination thereof, as solvent.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 2, wherein the activator is chlorobenzene, n-butanol, or a combination thereof.

Claim11 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 3, wherein the activator is chlorobenzene, n-butanol, or a combination thereof.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 2, wherein the sodium is dispersed in the solvent by means of a high speed turbine stirrer.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 3, wherein the sodium is dispersed in the solvent by means of a high speed turbine stirrer.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 4, wherein the sodium is dispersed in the solvent by means of a high speed turbine stirrer.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 2, wherein from 4 to 8 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 2; and 2 to 4 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 1.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 3, wherein from 4 to 8 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 2; and 2 to 4 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 1.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 4, wherein from 4 to 8 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 2; and 2 to 4 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 1.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 5, wherein from 4 to 8 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 2; and 2 to 4 atom equivalents of the sodium are used for the preparation of compounds of formula (I) when m is 1.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 2, wherein the reaction (1) of the organic phosphorus halides (II) with the sodium is carried out at a temperature of from -20° to +160°C.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The process according to claim 3, wherein the reaction (1) of the organic phosphorus halides (II) with the sodium is carried out at a temperature of from -20° to +160°C.